THE SINFVL MANS *SEARCH:* OR SEEKING OF GOD.

Preached by Henrie Smith, and publiſhed according to a true corrected Copie, ſent by the Author to an Honorable Ladie.

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THE SINFVLL MANS SEARCH.

IOB. 8.5.6.7.

5. *If thou wilt earely seeke vnto God, and pray to the Almightie.*
6. *If thou be pure and vpright: then surelie hee will awake vnto thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousnes prosperous.*
7. *And though thy beginning be but small: yet thy latter end shall greatly increase.*

IN a sicke and euill affected bodie (dearely beloued) we vsuallie see preparatiues ministred, that the maladies may bee made more fit and pliable, to receiue wholesome medicines. The like, yea and

greater regarde ought wee to haue of our ſoules, which being not craſie onlie, or lightly affected with ſinne, but ſicke euen vnto death, had need to be prepared with threats and exhortations, comfortes and conſolations, one way or other, that they may be made fit, not to receiue the preparatiue, but the perfection of happie ſaluation. And for this cauſe haue I made choiſe of this part of ſcripture, as of a light to ſhine vnto vs in darkneſſe, a direction to our ſteps, and a Lanthorne to our pathes; while we wander through the boiſtrous waues of this wicked world. The Text is plaine, and obiect to euerie mans capacitie, naturally budding into bloſſomes: The firſt containing our dutie, which wee are to performe towards God. The ſecond, Gods promiſes, if we performe this dutie.

Our dutie towards God is implied in theſe three conditions. Firſt, *If thou wilt earely ſeeke vnto God.* Secondly, *If thou wilt pray vnto the Almightie.* Thirdlie,

lie, *If thou bee pure and vpright*: so that the whole consisteth on these three points. First what it is that God requireth; namelie, a diligent and speedie search in these words: *If thou wilt seeke earlie*. Secondly, how thy search is to be made in praier, in these wordes: *If thou wilt pray to the Almightie*. Thirdly, what effecte these thinges ought to worke in vs, a puritie and sinceritie of life, in these wordes: *If thou be pure and vpright*. Diuis.

As our dutie towards God consisteth in three poyntes: so Gods blessings towards vs, is also threefold aunswerable to the same. First for seeking hee promiseth, *he will awake vnto thee*. Secondly, for praying vnto him, *he wil make the habitations of thy righteousnesse prosperous*. Thirdly, for being pure and vpright, *hee will make thy latter end increase exceedingly*: yea, though thy beginning be but small.

First therfore concerning the search, it is a worke both in desire and labour Concerning the search.

to bee ioyned to God. In the Pſalme this ſtandeth for the burthen of the ſong: *They called vppon the Lorde in the time of their trouble, & he deliuered them.* It is but *Aske and haue, ſeeke and finde, knocke and it ſhall be opened vnto you.* Saluing that heere theſe things are to bee regarded, to wit: how, by whom, and when we muſt ſeeke the Lord. How? Firſt, faithfully: for if yee haue but as much as *a graine of Muſtard ſeed, and ſay vnto this mountaine, remooue, it ſhall remooue, and nothing ſhall be impoſſible vnto yee.* Then next, humbly: for it is the humble petitiō that pierceth the skies, and that ſhewed the Publican to depart home to his houſe, more iuſtified than the boaſting Phariſie: and they alone that be humble and meeke, find reſt for their ſouls. And laſt of all, continually: for we muſt not faint in well dooing; becauſe the rewarde is not promiſed *to him that dooth, but to him that continueth to doo.*

But wee may long ſeeke and neuer finde,

finde, except wee ſeeke the Father by the Sonne: *For no man knoweth the Father but the Sonne, and hee to whome the Sonne ſhall diſcloſe him: hee is the way, the truth, & the life, and no man commeth to the Father but by him.* 1. Tim. 2. *There is one God, and one mediator betwixt God and man: the man Chriſt Ieſus.* 1. Iohn. So that if we ſinne, we haue an aduocate, Ieſus Chriſt the iuſt, and he is the propitiation for our ſinnes, onelie lette vs ſeeke the Lorde while he may be found.

And to this end the word *Seeking* is vſed in this place, that we may learne, that as the heauens, & the planets, and the whole frame of nature, were ordained to finiſh their courſe by motions and operation: ſo man, as he was ordained to a moſt bleſſed and happie end, ſhould attaine thereunto, not by ſlouth and idleneſſe, but by an earneſt ſeeking of the ſame. *The kingdom of heauen is like vnto a treaſure, which cannot be found without ſeeking and digging for it.* Matth. 13. 14. It is like the pretious Pearle, for which

the wise Merchant was contente not only to seeke, but to sell all that he had to buie it. God hath placed vs heere in this world as husbandmen, to plough vp the fallowe of our hearts; as labourers to worke in his vineyard; as trauailers to seeke a countrey; as souldiours to fight the battel of the Lord against the flesh, the world, & the deuill. And for this purpose hath he proposed vnto vs, an vntilled land, a vineyard, a triple enemie to fight against: that wee might remember, that we must till the ground, if we will reape the fruit: that wee must prune the Vine, if wee wyll drinke of the grape: that we must fight if we will ouercome. *He that tilleth the land* (saith the wise man) *shal be satisfied with bread, but he that followeth idlenesse, shalbe filled with pouerty*. Idlenesse is a moath or canker of the mind, and the fruits thereof are wicked cogitations, euill affections, & worse actions: corrupt trees without fruite, twice dead, and plucked vp by the roote, engendering

Prou. 28.

Iude. 1
Pro. 24.

dring in the minde a loathing of God and godlineſſe.

Eſchue therfore idlenes I beſeech yee, and by the want ye find in others learne inſtructions for your ſelues. Be not forgetfull how buſie your enemie is, if he finde yee idle: firſt he putteth yee in minde of ſome vanitie: then offereth opportunitie to practiſe: then he craueth conſent; and if yee graunt him that, hee triumpheth by adding practiſe: he leaueth no meanes vnattempted, wherby he may ſubuert and bring yee to perdition. To one (as to Eua) hee promiſeth the knowledge of good and euill. Another hee ſeduceth with lying ſpeeches, as he did Pharao the king, whom hee deceiued by falſe Prophets. To the Iewes he pretended the temple of the Lorde. To the Heathen he ſhewed vniuerſalities and antiquities. And to omit particulars, hee leaueth no mean vnattempted, wherby hee may entangle the ſoules of the ſimple, & wrap them in the ſnares of death.

Gen. 3

Exod 7. 22

1. King. 13.

1. Cor. 2.

death. Flie idleneſſe therefore, and ſeeke vertue, and the way therof: ſeek learning as for a iewell, make diligent ſearch and inquiſition after her: ſeeke earely and ſeeke late. In the morning ſowe thy ſeede, and in the euening let not thy hand reſt: ſeeke him in the day of trouble, and hee will deliuer thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie him. Seek him; there is the commaundement: he will deliuer thee; there is the promiſe: and thou ſhalt glorifie him; there is the condition. To diſobey the commandemẽt is rebellion, to diſtruſt the promiſe is infidelitie, to refuſe the condition is vile ingratitude. Wherefore let vs ſeeke, and ſeeke earneſtly, with a feruent ſpirit, and humblenes of hart; and lette vs perſwade our ſelues, that there is no ſeeking without finding, no opening without knocking.

2 The ſecond circumſtance to be cõſidered in this point, is to whome wee muſt ſeeke for theſe things. Our direc-
mes 1. 17. tion is made vnto God: *For euery good*

and

and perfect gift is from aboue, descending from the father of lightes. And as for manie causes we are to to seeke God, and to God alone, so especially for these foure.

First, because wee haue nothing of ourselues, nor of any other creature, but whatsoeuer wee haue, wee haue it of God: for what hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? in him we liue, wee moue, and haue our beeing. Art thou wise in thine owne conceite? O remember that the wisedome of the world is foolishnes with God! O consider that the naturall man vnderstandeth not the thinges of God! These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and are reuealed to babes and sucklings. Alas, what were man if hee were once left to himselfe? a Map of miserie, and a sinke of calamitie. Alas, how were hee able to resiste the fierie dartes of the aduersarie, who continually goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom hee may deuoure?

1 1. Cor. 2. Rom. 1.

1 Pet. 5. Reue. 2.

Heere

Heere yee maye note firſt his malice, for hee daylie accuſeth vs before the chiefe Iudge of the Kinges bench: when he cannot preuaile in this court, but ſeeth his billes of accuſation repelled: then hee remooueth the matter to the Court of our owne conſciences, where on the one ſide he layeth the bookes of the lawe, and ſtatutes made againſt ſinne: on the other ſide, the billes of accuſation brought in agaynſt vs out of the bookes of the lawe, alleadging theſe ſtrict places againſt vs: *The ſoule that ſinneth, ſhall dye the death: Curſſed is hee that abideth not in euerie poynte of the lawe, to doo it,* On the other ſide, hee bringeth in conſciences to witneſſe agaynſt vs, and then inferreth this harde concluſion: *Therefore there is no hope of ſaluation.*

Then if hee ſee that wee appeale from iuſtice to mercie, and ſaye; At what time ſoeuer a ſinner repenteth, the Iudge putteth all his wickedneſſe

out

out of his remembrance, hee dealeth with vs, as craftie worldlings deale in matters of lawe, who when they see theyr matters passe agaynst them in higher Courtes, bring downe their case into the country, to bee decided by the neighboures: who, eyther for their simplicitie cannot, or for their fauour dare not iudge of the trueth of the matter.

So our aduersarie, though GOD himselfe doe discharge vs, though our conscience testifie our innocencie: yet hee acuseth in the thirde Court before men, where hee is bolde to powre out his whole venome, and poyson of his malice agaynst vs, and to forge what lyes, and slaunders, and Lybels hee list, because hee knoweth they shall bee receyued as true. Thus hee accused Christ Iesus our blessed Lorde and Sauiour before Poncius Pilate, and caused diuerse false and vntrue witnesses to come in against him.

But

2 But if hee were malicious onely to wish our destruction, and not mightie to wreake his malice, wee should haue little cause to feare: but he is mighty, therefore hee is tearmed a Lyon, the power of darkenes, the great Dragon, which drew to the earth the third part of the starres of heauen: that is, with earthlye temptation to haue ouerthrowne them, which seemed to shine in the Church of God as Lampes and starres. O then how easie is our ouerthrow, if the Lord did not hold vs vp, which shine not as starres in heauen, but creepe like wormes on earth!

Luke 11.
Ephe. 6.
Reue 12.

3 Yet if hee were but malitious and mightie, it were better with vs: but he is fierce, and therefore called a roaring Lyon, who laying waite for the bloud of the godly, stirreth vp bloud thirstie persecuters to make themselues drunk with the bloud of the Saints: as most greeuously hee did from the time of Iohn Baptist, to the reigne of Maxentius, the space of 294. yeares, slaying

some

some by the sworde, burning other with fire, hanging some on the Gallowes, drowning some in Riuers, stabing some with forkes of Iron, pressing others vnto death with stones, deuouring manie thousandes of the tender Lambes of Christs flocke.

To this malice, might, and rage, is 4
added his subtill policie, which hee vseth in circumuenting the faythful, he dooth not pitch his tentes in anie one place: but walketh about from place to place to spy out his best aduantage, in the night hee soweth Tares, and in Iohn.
the daye hee hindereth the growth thereof.

Hee proceedeth after further, and 5
added to his policie, industrie; he considereth our natures and dispositions, & to what sinnes we do most incline: and thereunto hee applieth himselfe, sometimes by flatterie, sometimes by feare, sometimes by feeding our humours hee subtillie entiseth vs, sometimes by violence hee goeth about to

enforce

inforce vs, somtime by changing himselfe into an Angell of light, hee endeuoureth to betraye our soules into his handes, and in whatsoeuer estate hee findeth vs, he thereby taketh occasion to lay siedge to our soules.

Thus yee see noted in a worde, the force of our aduersary, examine now your selues, whether yee haue anye thing in your selues, and you shal find nothing but weakenesse and corruption. It is God that giueth strength to the mighty, wisdom to the prudent, & knowledge to the vnderstanding: hee teacheth Dauids hand to fight, and his fingers to battaile, hee giueth strength to his armes to breake a Bowe, euen a bow of steele; wherfore let neither the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength: but let him that glorieth, glory onely in the Lord.

Psal. 144.

2 Secondly, we are to seek vnto God alone, because none is so present as he; for God, because he is almightie, and with his power filleth both heauen & earth,

earth, is present alwais with them that feare him, and readie to succour them in distresse. The Lorde is neere to all that cal vpon him in truth, he heareth our gronings and sighs, and knoweth what thinges are necessarie for vs before we aske.

The third reason why we must seek vnto God, is; none is so able to helpe vs as he: but of this I shall haue particular occasion to speake when I come to this point, *and pray to the Almightie.* 3

The fourth reason why wee must seeke Christ alone, is; because there is none so willing to helpe vs as he. It is a great courage to vs to make sute, when we are perswaded of the willingnesse of him to whom we make sute: and I praie yee, who was euer more carefull for our saluation, and more watchfull ouer vs, than the Lord? Who euer put his trust in him, & was confounded? In this respect he is called a Father, bicause, as the Father tendreth his Son: so the Lorde doth all those that put 4

their truſt in him. Can there bee anie more willing to helpe vs than Chriſt? whoſe whole head was ſicke, & whoſe heart was heauie for our ſakes? yea, in whoſe body, from the ſole of the foot to the crowne of the heade, was nothing but wounds, and ſwellings, and ſores? but alas this was nothing to that he ſuffered for our ſakes.

He was compaſſed about with feares and horrors, til his ſweat was drops of bloud, & his bones bruſed in the fleſh: hee was whipped, and ſcourged, and chaſtiſed with ſorows, til he cried out in the bitternes of his ſoule: *O Lord, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſſe from me.* The heauie hand of God was ſo greeuous vpō him, that it bruſed his very bones and rent his reines aſunder; he could finde no health in his fleſh, but was wounded, yea wounded to the death, euen the moſt bitter death vppon the croſſe. His tender fingers were nayled to the croſſe, his face was wrinckled with weeping & wailing, his ſides im-

brued

brued & gored with his owne bloud, ſpurting & guſhing freſh from his ribs, the ſhadow of death was vpō his eies.

O what griefe could be like to this, or what condemnation could bee ſo heauy, ſith there was no wickednes in his hands? ſith he was the brightnes of his fathers glorie, and the ſon of righteouſnes that ſhined in the worlde: as to ſee his dayes at an ende, to ſee ſuch throbbing ſighes, & carefull thoughts without cauſe of his, ſo deeply ingrauen in the tables of his breſt. But was this all? no my brethren, ſith his excellency was ſuch aboue al creatures, that the world was not worthy to giue him breath, it was a greater grief vnto him to ſee himſelf made a worme, and not a man, a ſhame of men, and contempt of the people; to ſee his life ſhut vp in ſhame & reproches, how could it but ſhake his bones out of ioint & make his hart melt in midſt of his bowels? who was euer ſo ful of wo, & who euer bin broght ſo low into the duſt of death?

vpon whom did the malice of Sathan euer get ſo great a conqueſt?

This though it were exceeding, yet it was not all, no, it was but a taſte of griefe in compariſon of the reſte: behold therfore (if your watrie eyes will ſuffer you to behold) the depth of all miſeries yet behinde: the ſinne that he hated, he muſt take vpon his own bodie, and beare the wrath of his father powred out againſt it. This is the fulneſſe of all paines that compaſſed him round about, which no tongue is able to vtter, nor heart conceiue: the anger of the Father burneth in him, euen to the bottome of hell, and deepe ſincke of confuſion: it wrapped him in the chaines of eternall death: it crucified him, and threw him downe into the bottomleſſe pit of calamity, and made his ſoule by weeping and wayling to melt into theſe bitter teares trickling from his eyes. *O God my God, why haſt thou forſaken me.*

O that my head were a Well of wa-

ters,

ters, and a fountoine of teares, that I might weepe day and night at the remembrance hereof: but least I linger too long about one flower, while I haue many to gather, I will conclude this poynt thus in a word. Sith Christ hath suffered these, and an infinite number such like tormentes for our sakes; it is blasphemous once to dream or imagine anie to be more willing to helpe vs than he: nay, he is more readie to heare our praiers, than we to offer them vnto him, insomuch that hee complaineth by the Prophet Esay: *I haue beene found of them that sought mee not, all the day long haue I stretched out my hand vnto a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good, euen after their own imaginations.* And vnto Ierusalem he sayth: *O Ieruſalem, Ieruſalem, how often would I haue gathered you together, as the Hen gathereth her Chickins, and you would not?* Wherefore to ende this point: Seeke for knowledge as for a treasure, and for wisdome, as for the

Esay. 65.

Math. 23.

wedge of golde of Ophir. No mention shall be made in comparison of it, of Corrall, Gabish, or that precious Onix; *For wisdome is more pretious than Pearles.* But aboue all thinges, seeke it where it may bee found, and where is this place of vnderstanding? Surely, man knoweth not the path therof: the deep saith, it is not in me; the sea saith, it is not in mee: death and destruction say, wee haue heard the fame thereof with our eares: all creatures say, it is not with vs: but God vnderstandeth the way thereof, & vnto man he saith: *The feare of the Lorde is the beginning of wisedome, and to departe from euill is vnstanding.*

Iob.28.

Pro.9.

3 The third circumstance is, when we must seek vnto God; and holy Dauid answereth, *Earlie, euen in a time when he may be found.* Let vs redeeme this day, which wee haue foreslowed so manie daies, wherin we haue so long hardened our hearts: let vs take vp this day, & make it the day of our repentance;

Psal.32.

let

let vs make it a day of newnes of life, as it is the first day of the new yere: let euen this moment be the last of a sinful life, and the first day to godlinesse. And as the wise man saith: *Make no long tarrying to turne vnto the Lord, and put not off from day to day, for sodainly shal the Lords wrath breake, & in thy security thou shalt be destroyed, and shalt perish in the time of vengeance.* Eccle. 5.

Art thou a Magistrate, placed in high roome and authoritie, and seated in the throne of dignitie? then vse not this thy might to wrong and oppression, grinde not the faces of the poore, swell not with pryde, despising his lowe estate: *Sell not thy righteousnesse for siluer, preferring the Merchants of Babilon, before the Cittizens of Ierusalem.* Amos 8.

Art thou a priuate labouring man? *Doo thy dutie truely, bee subiect, and liue in dread to displease the good Magistrate.* 1. Pet. 3.

Art thou olde, and hast consumed the flower of thy youth in wantonnesse?

Breake off thy course, and frame thy selfe to sobrietie: giue the water no passage, no not a little: for if it haue neuer so little issue, it wil ouerflow thee; and if thou do slacke the reynes neuer so little, thy sinnes will carry thee (like a wilde horsse) thorow brambles and bushes, and will leaue no soundnesse in thy flesh, worke this reformation in thy selfe betimes, euen to day, euen this first day of the new yeare: *If ye wil heare my voice, harden not your hearts.*

Art thou young, and dost begin to flourish like the young Palme tree? O consider, that the only way to retaine the blossome of thy beautie, and to keepe thy floure from withering, and thy leafe from fading away: is to seeke earelie vnto GOD, and to apply thy mynde to vnderstanding; to preuent the morning watches, and to giue thy body to be moistened of the morning dew! For beside the good houres that are well imployed in some good studie and holy exercise: earche rising

bringeth health to the body, and encreaseth the number of thy dayes.

Seeke therefore, and seeke earelie, consecrate your selues Nazarites vnto the Lorde, touch no vncleane thing, giue no prouocation to the flesh. *Striue with the Cocke in watchfulnes, & rise with the chirping of the birds: sacrifice your body a sweet smelling sacrifice vnto the Lord. This sacrifice is like a sacrifice of fine floure: it is like the fatte taken from the peace offering: yea, it is better than any sacrifice, it is like the flower of Roses in the spring of the yere, and as the Lilies in the springs of waters, and as the braunches of Frankensence in the time of Summer*; and as a vessell of massy gold beset with pretious stones, as a faire Oliue that is fruitfull, and as the tree that groweth vp to the clouds. Ecclc.12. Eccle.32. 47.50.

Hauing spoken of the Search, it followeth that I speake of the manner how it is to bee made: In prayer, by these wordes; *If thou pray vnto the Almightie.*

I shewed ye before the force of our aduer-

aduersarie; receiue nowe a Sheeld against his force, euen the shield of praier. He is not to bee resisted by ringing an hallowed bell, not by sprinkling of holy water, not by the reliks of saints, not by our owne works & merits, for these are weapons of his own making; but by an earnest seeking to GOD, which search and seeking must bee made by praier, against which his poisoned venome taketh no effect.

It is his malice that accuseth? praier pleadeth thy case before God, and repelleth all his accusations: for all the prophets doe witnes, that whatsoeuer we aske in praier, if we beleue we shal receiue it. Is it his rage and furie that should terrifie vs? nay, that praier that strengthened Sampson to rent a yong Lyon, as one should haue rent a Kid, hauing nothing in his hande, shall smite and shutte vp the mouth of this Lyon. As for his pollicie, and walking vp and downe, seeking to deuoure vs: it cannot preuaile, *for the prayer of the faith-*

faithfull shall saue them, & the Lord shall raise them vp, & if they haue committed sin it shalbe forgiuen them; & after this conflict ended, they shall triumph for euer with Iesus Christ our sauiour. But in any case, see you vnite to your praier, knowledge; that ye bee not seduced to offer your petitiõs to strange gods, as Saints, stocks or stones. Then consent that we aske only in the name of Christ Iesus, not for anie desert of our own: for whosoeuer beleeueth in Christ, shall haue remission of sins, he shall not perish, but haue life euerlasting, he shal not come into iudgement but shall passe from death to life. Lastly, a confidence, which is, a certaine perswasion of Gods fauor and mercie towards vs: this is that praier of which the Lambe testifieth; *that whatsoeuer we ask by this praier, it shalbe giuẽ to vs by God the father*. A thing (dearly beloued) so precious, that nothing is more accepted in heauen, nothing more grateful to God: a seruice cõmanded of God him-

Iohn. 16.

Acts. 25. 10.

Math. 18.

himselfe, taught by Christ our Saui-
our, and frequented by the Angels: a
thing of more force with God, than a-
ny Oration of the eloquent.

Hast thou not heard howe the Sun
stoode still in the firmament, and was
not suffered to run his course? Iosua
and Ezechias prayed, and the Sunne
stood still. Hast thou not heard of the
stopping of the Lyons mouthes? Da-
niel praied, and his praier stopped the
Lions greedy and deuouring throtes.
Hast thou not heard of the diuiding
of the red sea? the Israelites praied, and
the waters of Iorden were dryed vp,
yea the Israelites prayed, and the wa-
ters stood about them like vnto a wal.
Hast thou not heard howe the fierie
furnace lost his heate? the three chil-
dred praied, and the fire lost his heate.
Hast thou not heard how the heauens
were opened and shut? Elyas prayed,
and the heauens were shutte vp three
yeeres; Elias praied, and the clowdes
powred downe raine from heauen.

O sure Fortresse, more forcible then any engyne, and stronger than the gates of hell, and to conclude the sum and substance of all in few words: the only thing wherby mortall men haue the clowds, & the stars, & the Angels, and all the powers of heauen at commandement. For as Deborah sung in her song: They fought from heauen, euen the stars in their courses fought against Sisera: so all creatures haue been subiect to the praiers of the faithfull, to reuenge the Lordes quarrel, to helpe the Lorde, to helpe the Lorde against the mightie. Prayer hath euer bin the cognisance, and the victory, & the triumph of the faithfull: for as the soule giueth life to the body, so praier giueth life to the soule. Iud. 5.

O that I could engraue the loue of it in your hearts, as with a Diamond, and so instill your mindes, that my wordes might bee prickes vnto your consciences, and thereby giue yee occasion to pray often. It is a wonderfull

matter

matter to be able to perſwade mẽ, but if praier be able to perſuade the liuing God, O how great is the force therof: it goeth through the clowds, and ceaſeth not till it come neere, & will not depart, till the moſt high haue reſpect thereunto. O that you would therfore pray often, and learne of Chriſt (the moſt abſolute patterne of our life) to pray cõtinually. He praied in his babtiſme, in the wilderneſſe, in preaching, in working of miracles, in his paſſion, on the mount, in the garden, in his laſt ſupper, in cõmending his ſpirit to god at al times & in al places, that he might leaue vnto vs an example of the ſame. It followeth, *and to pray to the Almightie*. To thoſe three former reaſons which I brought, why we muſt ſeeke and pray to God alone, I added this as a fourth: becauſe there is none ſo able to help vs as the Lord. He that putteth his truſt in the Lord, ſhall be as mount Sion. If God be on our ſide, who can be againſt vs? It is God that iuſtifieth,

Luke 6.
Luke 5.
Luke 6.
John. 11.
Math. 26.
John 18
Luk. 22.
Luk. 23.
Math. 19.

Pſal. 39.

Rom 8.

who

who condemneth: The Lord destroy- 2 Tim.
eth the counsaile of the Heathen, hee
maketh their deuises to be of no effect.
Christ is the Angel of great counsell, Psalm 33.
wisedome, and vnderstanding, and Esay 9.
there is no deuise against the Lord. Prou. 2.

The world notwithstanding is come to that frame, that euery man hath got ten him a strange kind of beleef. Some beleeue not the law but the prophets: some be perswaded in the supremacy, but not in the sacrament: some in free wil, but not in merit: some in inuocation vpon saints, but not in purgatory; some in pilgrimages and pardons, but not in Images: some like the doctrine wel inough, but not the preachers: the most beleeue little, yet many beleeue somwhat, few beleeue all: therefore to deale plainly, because plain dealing is best, you must not beleeue by the halfes: I meane, you must not repose some trust in God, & some in Saintes, but all in the Lorde. *The Gods of the* Psal. 105.
Gentiles they haue mouthes and speake not, eyes and see not, eares and heare not, then

what

what can be looked for at their hands? But the Lorde is strong and mightie, a mercifull God: and therefore thorow the Scriptures, hee is called a Rocke, a Fortresse, a strong Tower, a Sheeld, a horne of saluation, a refuge, the Lorde of Hostes, with other such like appellations, that we might be assured, that our helpe and deliuerance commeth from the Lord.

Putteſt thou any trust in man, whose breath is in his nosthrils? Cursled is he that maketh man his strength, and flesh his arme. Surely Pharaoh, and all princes are a broken staffe, on which if a man leane, it will strike into his hand & pierce it, and lay him groueling in the dust: *It is better therefore to trust in the Lord, than to put anie confidence in Princes.* Thinkeſt thou that Angels, or Saintes, or Images, can helpe thee? O foolish and impious pietie, to attribute more vnto the Angels, than they dare arrogate vnto themselues. The Angell in the Reuelation, forbiddeth

Iohn

Iohn to worship him. As for the Image, we read that to turne the glory of the incorruptible God, into the similitude of a corruptible creature, is idolatrie. Well may I then affirme with Moses, *Cursed be the Image, and the Image-maker.* The conclusion therfore of this point, is this, that we seek the Lord and his strength euermore, that we pray vnto God in humilitie and sinceritie, and in full assurance of faith continually, who without end is to be sought, because without end he is to be beloued. Rom. Deut.

The third thing contained in our duty is, what effect this seeking and praying ought to worke in vs, comprehended in these wordes: *If thou be pure and vpright.* If the clowdes bee full, they will powre foorth raine vpon the earth: and vnpossible is it, that a man that seeketh after God and prayeth vnto the Almightie, should not bring foorth the fruites of a godly life, for if the tree be good, the fruits cannot be bad: and if the heade of the water be pure, it will sende foorth pure waters into the Cesternes. Wherefore as good

motions are ſtirred vp by prayer, ſo muſt they be foſtred by practiſe of life, according to that of the Apoſtle: *Quench not the ſpirit, nor greeue the holy one of God, by whom ye are ſealed to the day of redemption.*

Theſſ.5.

Hee quencheth dearely beloued the ſpirit, which being once lightened with the ſparckles of fayth, and felt Gods motions in his heart: dooth neglect to encreaſe the one to a flame, and the other to good workes in his life, but with the dogs turneth to his vomite, and with the Sow that was waſhed, to her wallowing againe in the mire. Therefore (beloued) loue and ſeeke the Lord, pray to the Almightie, be pure and vpright in conuerſation, flie from ſinne as from a Serpent; for if thou come neare, it will byte thee. The teeth thereof are as the teeth of a Lion, to ſlay the ſoules of men, & al iniquitie is as a two edged ſword, the woundes that it giues cannot be healed. I dare not ſtand as I would vpon theſe pointes, fearing tediouſnes: wherfore let this ſuffice for the former generall part, concerning the dutie we owe vnto God.

Ne.4.

Now

Now Gods promiſes for the performance hereof, yeeld vnto vs moſt plentifull matter of doctrine and conſolation. Firſt, of his iuſtice, that as hee will ſuffer no ſinne vnpuniſhed: ſo he will leaue no good worke vnrewarded, but giueth to euery ſeuerall action his ſeuerall hire, & iuſt recompence of rewarde. Shall the hower come, in which all that are in their graues, ſhall heare a voyce, & come foorth: they that haue doone well, to the reſurrection of life, they that haue done euill, to the reſurrection of condemnation? Shall the Lorde ſearch Ieruſalem with Lanthorns? Shall all fouſe corners be ſwept, and all pleits and wrinckles be vnfolded? Shall the ſea, graue, death, and hell, giue vp all that is in them? and ſhal all the dead (both great and ſmall) ſtande before GOD, when the bookes are opened? and ſhall euery man haue praiſe of God according vnto his deſeruing? Shall wee then diſcerne betweene the veſſelles of honour and of wrath, betweene Sheepe and Goates, the iuſt and vniuſt? Finallie, ſhall there bee an

infallible, generall, and incorrupt iudgement, wherin the booke of all our offences shall be laide wide open? Now God bee mercifull vnto vs: bee fauourable, O Lord, be fauourable. But to proceed, is it thy nature (O Lorde) to gather vp the wheat, and burne the tares, to cut down all fruitlesse trees, and cast them into the fire: yea, into a fierie furnace, that neuer shall bee quenched; into an vtter darkenesse, where is weeping, wayling, and gnashing of teeth; then bee fauourable O Lord, be fauourable.

Rom. 2.

Matth. 13. 15 30 41.

Dooth not the Lorde spare Dauid, a king and a prophet for murther? dooth he not spare the Sichemits for adultery? nor Absolon for treason? nor Saule for tyrannie? nor Elie for negligence? nor Achab, Ieroboam, nor Iezabell for crueltie? nor Herod, Nabuchadnezar, and Lucifer for pride; nor Pharaoh for incredulitie: then be fauorable O Lord, be fauourable to vs, in whom almost euerie one of these sinnes do dwell & remaine.

Did the Lord for corruption ouerflow the world with water? did he burne Sodome

dome for her villanie? did he caſt Adam and Eue out of paradiſe, for eating of the forbidden fruite? did hee ſtone a poore wretch to death, for gathering chips on the Sabaoth day? then be fauourable, O Lord, bee fauourable vnto vs. But dooth not the Lord ſpare the Cedar tree for his height? nor the Oake for his ſtrength? nor the Poplar for his ſmoothneſſe? nor the Lawrel for his greennes? No verely, from the Cedar that is in Lybanon, euen to thy Hyſope that groweth out of thy wall, yea, euery one that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen down and caſt into the fire: it is a righteous thing with God, to render vengeance to thoſe that diſobey him, and to deſtroy ſuch as haue forſaken the law by euerlaſting perditiō.

Beholde, the Lorde ſhall come in the great and latter day of iudgement, when none ſhall eſcape his iudgement ſeate, with clowdes ſhall hee come, and euery eye ſhall ſee him, euen they which pierced him thorow, ſhall alſo wayle before him, beeing ſummoned all to appeare moſte fearefullye before his imperiall

Reue. 1. 7

2. Cor. 5.

throne of Maiestie: then be fauorable O Lord, be fauorable. Alas, with what eies shal we miserable sinners behold him, so gloriously sitting in his royal kingdome, with all his mighty and holy Angels, and whole number of Saints, sounding with the voice of the archangell, & trumpet of God: causing the heauens to passe away with a noyse, and the elementes to melt like waxe, and the earth to burne with the woorkes thereof? yea, with what eyes shall we behold him, when wee see the Sunne darkened, the Moone eclipsed, and the starres fall downe from heauen? But alas when he taketh the furbished blade into his hand, when he is readie to throwe the fierie thunderboltes of his wrath, when hee summoneth before him, the worme that neuer dieth, the fire that neuer shal be quenched, to reuenge vpon the wicked: into what a plight are they then driuen? then leaue they off; be fauourable O Lord, bee fauourable, and say to the hilles; O ye mountaines, come and couer vs, O ye waters come & ouerwhelme vs: wo, wo, wo, how great is this dark-

1. Pet. 3.

darkneſſe? The godly on the other ſide, are bathed in ſuch ſtreames of bliſſe, and aduaunced to ſuch happines, as neither tongue can vtter, nor heart conceiue.

The ſecond thing we haue to note in his promiſes, is his mercie, which exceedeth all his workes. For God, though he haue giuen a curſſe of the lawe againſt ſinners, yet ſeing Chriſt for the penitent hath borne the curſe, wherby his iuſtice is not impayred: he is content to accept our weakenes as our ſtrength, to recompence our imperfection with reward of greateſt perfection, & that which we can performe but in ſmall part, he is content to accept as whole, not for any deſert of ours, but in the ſatisfaction of his ſonne, who paid with the ſeal of his own bloud, the ranſome for our ſins, he hath cancelled the hand writing that was againſt vs. Wherfore we are to pray vnto God, that whenſoeuer our ſins ſhal come in queſtion before him: that he would look vpon Chriſt Ieſus, the true loking glas, in whō he ſhall find vs moſt pure & innocent, & to ſhine moſt cleerly in the righteouſnes

which hee hath giuen vs by faith: ſo that wee appeare not in our owne righteouſnes, but in the righteouſnes of the lambe who hauing taken away the ſins of the world, and hauing made vs as white as ſnow, though wee were as red as Crimſon: ſaith, he will be mercifull to our iniquities, and wil remember our ſinnes no more. Of him do all the Prophets beare witneſſe, that thorow his name, all that beleeue, ſhall receiue remiſſion of theyr ſinnes. Againe, drinke yee all of this, for this is my bloud, which is ſhed for the remiſſion of ſinnes. Chriſt gaue himſelfe for our ſinnes, that hee might deliuer vs from the curſſe of the lawe, euen according to the will of his Father. Chriſt bare our ſinnes in his own body on the tree, that we being deliuered from ſin, might liue in righteouſnes: by whoſe ſtripes we are healed, for we were as ſheepe going aſtray, but are now returned to the ſhepheard and Biſhop of our ſoules. It is no more but beleeue, and be ſaued; beleeue and receyue remiſſion: beleeue, and lay of thine owne righteouſneſſe, and inueſt

thy

thy ſelfe with with the righteouſneſſe o
the vnſpotted Lambe.

Dauid was young, and after was old: yet in all his daies he neuer ſaw the righteous forſaken. Sometimes he ſcourgeth his children, but like a louing Father hee layeth more vpon them than they are able to beare, for hee afflicteth them for his own iuſtice, becauſe they are ſinners: for his wiſedome, to exerciſe their faith: for his mercie, to cauſe them to repent: but this is the end of all, he helpeth them in their diſtreſſes, he reuengeth himſelfe vpon his enemies, and giueth to his people reſt and quietneſſe. O that we would therefore praiſe the Lord, and forget not all other his ſingular benefits: O that we would confeſſe, that his mercy endureth for euer.

The third thing to note in his promiſes, is his bountifull kindneſſe, in requiting ſo ſmall a thing, with ſo great and liberal bleſſings: and bindeth himſelfe by obligations (as it were) that as ſure as we performe the one, ſo hee will not faile to accompliſh the other.

The

The fourth, is his patience & long ſuffering, which is not ſlackneſſe, as ſome men account ſlackneſſe: but is patience, becauſe willinglie hee would haue no man to periſh, but gladly would haue all men come to repentance. He is content to ſtay our leyſure, till we ſeeke and pray vnto him: and neuer ſmiteth, till there be no hope of redreſſe.

The fift, is his loue, in that hee is content to ſtirre vs vp to holy exerciſes, and puritie of life, and to allure vs with faire promiſes of aide, & proſperous encreaſe of all his bleſſings in this world. The particular examination of theſe bleſſinges woulde require a larger diſcourſe, then (fearing tediouſnes) I dare preſume to trouble yee withall: wherefore a worde of each, and ſo I end.

Touching the firſt, where it is ſaid, *God will awake vp vnto thee*, it is a greater benefit than the words import: for it ſignifieth not onely that he will heare thee, but that he will alſo doo what thou deſireſt, and ſatisfie thy requeſt. As long as the ſinner ſleepeth, the Lorde is ſaide to be a

ſleepe:

ſleepe, but aſſoone as the ſinner awaketh from ſinne, God will ariſe (ſayth Dauid) and his enemies ſhall bee ſcattered: and they that hate him, ſhall flie before him, as the ſmoke vaniſheth before the wind, and as the waxe melteth before the fire, euen ſo ſhal the wicked periſh at the preſence of God. Wherfore as Paul exhorted the Epheſians, ſo I exhort you; *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ſtand vp from the dead, and Chriſt ſhal giue thee light*: awake vnto God and God will awake vnto thee, & Chriſt euen the ſonne of God, the bright morning ſtar, ſhall giue thee the light of life. Ephe.

In the ſecond he promiſeth abundance of worldly bleſſinges, in recompence of prayer, for it is ſaid: *He will make the habitations of thy righteouſneſſe proſperous*: that is, the Lorde will make peace within thy walles, and proſperitie within thy pallaces: hee will commaund his bleſſings to bee with thee in thy ſtore-houſe, and in all thou ſetteſt thy hand vnto: he will open vnto thee his good treaſures, euen the Heauens to giue rayne on thy lande in due ſeaſon. Thou ſhalt laye vp Reue. Pſal. Deut.

gold,

golde, as the dust, and the gold of Ophir, as the flint of the riuer: thou shalt wash thy pathes with butter, and thy rockes shal poure out riuers of oyle: thou shalt call saluation thy wall, and prayse shall be in thy gates. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth God.

Lastly, for *beeing pure and vpright*: hee will make thy latter end greatly increase, and that thou maist the lesse mistrust his promise, hee will doo it, though thy beginning be but small.

Heere (brethren) ye see what a sea of matter is offered mee, whereunto if I woulde commit my selfe, I might discourse vnto yee, what straunge euentes (by Gods prouidence) haue happened in the world, what great Kinges and Potentates haue been plucked downe from theyr thrones, and what contemptible persons in the eye of the worlde, haue beene aduanced to theyr roomes. How Mardocheus a straunger was exalted into Hamons place: how Ioseph and Daniell, the one a bond-man in Egypt, the other a Captiue in Babylon, were made

princes

Princes in those kingdomes. But because I will not ouer-much transgresse the bondes of modestie, or hold ye longer than in this place I haue beene accustomed: onely remember what the Prophet sayth; *Hee raiseth the needie out of the dust, and lifteth the poore out of the mire, that he might set him with the Princes, euen with the Princes of the world.* Psal.

Remember the example of Dauid, whom the Lorde chose, and tooke from the Ewes greate with young: that hee might feede his people in Iaacob, and his inheritance in Israell. Remember the example of Iob, how the Lorde turned the captiuitie of Iob, as the riuers in the south, how hee blessed the last dayes of Iob more than the first, how he gaue him sheepe, and Camels, and Oxen, and shee Asses in more aboundance than hee had before, howe hee encreased him with sonnes and daughters, euen to the fourth generation, so that hee dyed being olde and full of dayes. Remember euen our owne estate, for whome the Lorde hath doone great thinges already: as created

Psal. Iob. Psal. Psal.

vs, and redeemed vs, and ſanctified vs, and not long ſince deliuered vs from the gaping iawes of thoſe that ſought to ſucke our bloud. Vppon ſome hee hath beſtowed humilitie, whereby theyr mindes are adorned with vertue: honor vppon others, whereby their perſons are inueſted with maieſtie: vppon others comlineſſe, whereby the other two are graced: vppon others Orchardes which they planted not, or atleaſt vnto which they gaue no increaſe: vppon others increaſe of vertuous children, whereby their poſteritie is preſerued: vppon others, the free paſſage of his word, which along time had beene obſcured by ignoraunce, the mother of deuotion, as the ſhauelinges call it, but vnder a ſtepdame of deſtruction as wee perceiue it: and though hee beſtowe but ſome one or two of his bleſſinges vppon vs, yet howe much are wee bounde for theſe bleſſinges, to ſing prayſe, and honour, and glorye, vnto him that ſitteth vppon the throne, and vnto the Lambe for euer. But vppon whome hee hath beſtowed

all

all theſe bleſſinges. O howe ſtrictlye by good cauſe are they bounde to magnifie the Lorde, and to reioyce in God theyr Sauiour. Examine then your owne conſciences, I beſeech yee, whether GOD hath beſtowed all theſe bleſſinges vppon you, or no: and if he haue; O what great cauſe haue yee to come before his face with praiſe, to ſing lowde vnto him with Pſalmes, to woorſhip and to fall downe before him, to giue vnto the Lorde the glory of his name, to bring an offering of thankes giuing, and to enter into his Courts with praiſe. And yet who knoweth, whether the Lord hath greater bleſſings for yee in ſtore, yee may be ſure he will pull downe the mightie from theyr ſeate, and exalte the humble and meeke. Surely, the Lorde dooth vſe vertue as a meane to bring vs to honour, and whoſoeuer you ſhall ſee endued with the vertues of this text, I meane, with ſeeking vnto God, with prayer and puritie of life: yee may bee ſure there is a bleſſing reſerued for him of the Lorde, yea, ſuch a bleſſing, as though his beginning

Pſal. 95
Pſalm. 96

be

be but small, yet his latter end shal greatly increase.

God increase the loue of these things in our heartes, and make vs worthie of Christs blessings, which hee hath plentifully in store for vs: that after hee hath heaped temporall blessings vpon vs, he would giue vs the blessing of all blessing, euen the lyfe of the world to come.

FINIS.

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